



**\*\*\*FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 9-13-07\*\*\***

***From the Office of the Director of Health***

**Business and Faith-based Organizations Encouraged to Prepare for Pandemic**

Approximately 2000 businesses and faith-based organizations in Springfield and Greene County will receive a special mailing from the Springfield-Greene County Health Department this week as part of National Emergency Preparedness Month. The mailing will include materials that can help them prepare for pandemic influenza.

"Business continuity will be vital to maintain a strong economy, keep our citizens employed and avoid service disruption during an influenza pandemic," says pandemic health planner Molly Holtmann. "Faith-based organizations will help by taking care of their members and the community in general."

The mailing will include a letter on the importance of preparing for a pandemic, an individual and family handbook entitled "How You Can Be Prepared for a Flu Pandemic," and a CD-Rom containing a business continuity template plan.

"We've already held a number of meetings for businesses and faith-based organizations in the area," adds Holtmann, "And the questions we hear repeatedly are 'What will the health department expect from us?' and 'What can we do to help in the community response?' We think this mailing and our continued outreach to these two groups will help answer those questions."

Businesses and faith-based organizations are encouraged to prepare today for pandemic influenza or any disaster by taking three simple steps: create a plan, prepare a kit and protect family and community. These steps are the crux of the Springfield-Greene County Health Department's *Operation Homebase* campaign. Materials are available at no cost at the Springfield-Greene County Health Department or by calling Molly Holtmann at (417) 864-1083.

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